



UQAT AND
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
Action Plan

2019-2024

UQAT

UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC
EN ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE

A WORD FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

The partnerships of the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT) with Indigenous communities arose from a shared belief that higher education would be decisive in bringing people together and improving their collective well-being.

By making Indigenous realities central to its strategic planning and resource deployment, our university has over the last 30 years gained expertise in teaching and research for, by, and with Indigenous people. This expertise is provided by professors, lecturers, and members of the professional, technical, and support staff, as well as by novel approaches, proven tools, dedicated infrastructures, and a collaborative network.

With implementation of the 2019-2024 Action Plan, an outcome of *Chantier peuples autochtones*, UQAT is seizing the opportunity to go beyond what has already been achieved while continuing to make active participation by members of the university community and the Indigenous communities a value added to development of these communities in Quebec, Canada, and elsewhere in the world.

We're convinced this action plan will be a means to reaffirm and gain recognition for UQAT's leadership in Indigenous realities as much in teaching, research, and creation as in community services.

Denis Martel, D.Sc.
Rector

Martine Rioux
General Secretary

Manon Champagne, Ph.D.
Vice-Rector for Teaching, Research, and Creation

Vincent Rousson
Assistant Vice-Rector for Development of Services and Partnerships

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To draw up the 2019-2024 Action Plan, *Chantier peuples autochtones* was able to count on involvement by the university community and on the insights of a working committee that brought together representatives from teaching and research units (TRUs), schools, and institutes, from services for Indigenous Peoples, and from external Indigenous partners. Its content is the result of many discussions and a broadly based process of validation. Thanks go to all of the people who have contributed directly or indirectly to this process! Your contribution and commitment will empower UQAT to make a difference for individuals, communities, and human environments.

ACTION PLAN WORKING COMMITTEE

Members (in alphabetical order): Lily Bacon, Suzy Basile, Luc Bélisle, Laurie Chabot, Manon Champagne, Marie-Josée Croteau, Nicole Fenton, François Godard, Sylvie Isabelle, Pierre Labelle, France Noël, Leonard Polson, Suzie Ratté, Martine Rioux, Éric Rosa, Vincent Rousson, Jean-Ambroise Vesac, Cyndy Wylde.

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

A university should be profoundly anchored in its environment while being open to the world. This idea inspired the effort to come up with the mission, vision, and values of UQAT's 2015-2020 Development Plan, which would in turn serve as guidelines for all stages of *Chantier peuples autochtones*.

OUR MISSION

By relying on the skills of its human resources, on accessibility, on partnership, and on innovation, the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT) creates, passes on, and mobilizes intellectual, scientific, and cultural knowledge so that it can help people to fulfil themselves and communities to grow on the territories it serves and in its partnerships nationally and internationally.

OUR VISION FOR 2020

The Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue will be renowned as an exceptional university, close to people and communities, innovative, open to the world, and committed to the success and excellence of its students. It will be, for its peers and partners, a point of reference for its cutting-edge courses, its applied and basic research, and its contributions to scientific, cultural, social, and economic progress.

OUR VALUES

- Humane** *Making the individual, whether a student, a staff member, an associate, or a partner, central to decision making by being welcoming and attentive, while respecting differences and seeking to benefit the greatest number.*
- Creative** *Developing a place for discussion that is open to path-breaking innovations, where curiosity is a source of wealth and where change becomes an ongoing opportunity to stand out and excel.*
- Bold** *Helping build the future of our regions and Quebec by daring to act differently, by going farther, and by pursuing excellence, while adhering to principles of sustainable development.*

GOAL OF “STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES”

As early as the 1970s members from Indigenous communities joined stakeholders from different walks of life and territories to push for the right to higher education in Abitibi-Témiscamingue and northern Quebec.

Gradually, links were forged between UQAT professors and Inuit, Algonquin, Atikamekw, and Cree communities in the field of training and then in research. The 2000s were a time of more sustained collaboration. Partnership with Indigenous peoples became a UQAT development priority, the First Peoples Building was erected on the Val-d'Or campus, expertise was developed in teaching and academic coaching to take the specificities of Indigenous students into account, and the needs of their communities were addressed by creating a range of programs in their fields of interest¹ and a research program.

In 2016, the School of Indigenous Studies was created. UQAT now has more capacity to develop teaching at all levels and research for, by, and with Indigenous partners in Quebec, Canada, and elsewhere in the world.

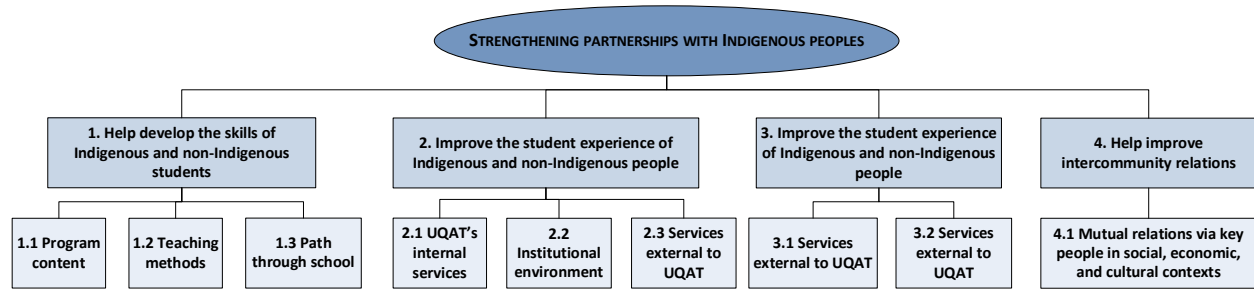
UQAT has awarded over 700 degrees to Indigenous students, it has positioned itself in networks of Indigenous research in Quebec, and it has trained over 2,500 mainly non-Indigenous people for Indigenous realities in nearly 60 organizations and businesses. Our university is committed to setting the standard for education in Indigenous realities.

In line with this commitment UQAT will **strengthen its partnerships** with Indigenous peoples and communities by:

- Acquiring the means to co-create a range of culturally appropriate programs that meet the visions, values, needs, and interests of Indigenous people;
- Improving its programs to give non-Indigenous students a chance to learn about Indigenous cultures and knowledge;
- Pursuing development of an institutional environment that will foster cultural security and be a supportive place for dialogue between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people;
- Helping create opportunities for sharing expertise and mobilizing capabilities in research and creation on Indigenous realities;
- Continuing to be a leading player in actions for intercultural mediation.

¹ i.e., in education sciences, Indigenous studies, management sciences, social work, plastic arts, digital creation, and tourism.

The 2019-2024 strategy for this goal is as follows:



POLICY AIM #1

HELP DEVELOP THE SKILLS OF INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

So that Indigenous and non-Indigenous UQAT graduates can make a difference in their communities, their workplaces, and society in general, UQAT is putting forward a series of actions with respect to its program content, its teaching methods in Indigenous contexts, and the path that students of Indigenous origin take through school. These actions will bring about our Vision of teaching for 2024.



Vision for 2024 – Teaching

By systematically taking a co-management approach to programs, with input from needs analysis, UQAT will set itself apart and provide “customized” responses in its partnerships with French-speaking and English-speaking Indigenous communities.

Indigenous culture and knowledge will be distinctive features of UQAT’s range of programs.

UQAT will work in concert to develop and manage its range of courses in line with Indigenous realities.

POLICY AIM #2

IMPROVE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE FOR INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

To make the experience of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students meaningful, positive, and lasting, UQAT is putting forward a series of actions to improve its internal services, to change the institutional environment, and to develop a range of external services that will meet Indigenous student needs. These actions will bring about our Vision of student experience for 2024.



Vision 2024 – Student experience

Indigenous culture will be visible at all centres and on all campuses of UQAT.

The full content of announcements for Indigenous students will be available in both French and English.

Attendance by Indigenous students on the Val-d'Or campus will not be limited by the hassle of registering and learning about the campus, getting housing, and accessing services for cultural security.

At UQAT, all of the non-Indigenous students will be made aware of the realities of Indigenous peoples and will have access to opportunities for dialogue between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people.

All UQAT graduates will have had an opportunity to take one or more courses on Indigenous knowledge and culture.

The roles and responsibilities of the First Peoples Service (FPS) will be clearly defined and brought into line with UQAT's other services, and the FPS will have the means to assist in providing UQAT courses on campus and in the communities (classroom learning and distance education).

POLICY AIM #3

CONTRIBUTE THROUGH RESEARCH AND CREATION TO THE WELL-BEING OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

To help realize the full potential of research and creation on Indigenous realities by TRUs, schools, and institutes, UQAT is putting forward a series of actions to develop the environment of research and creation and to support research and creation. These actions will bring about our Vision of research and creation for 2024.



Vision for 2024 – Research and creation

The environment of research and creation (e.g., training programs, scholarships, research chairs or laboratories, support services, mentorship, financial leverage, etc.) will become more conducive to recruitment of professors and students interested in doing graduate work on Indigenous realities. Support will be given for their research projects.

UQAT will always be in the forefront when it comes to research ethics with, by, and for Indigenous peoples.

UQAT will actively help disseminate, nationally and internationally, research findings in line with Indigenous realities.

UQAT will be rightly recognized by the Quebec and Canadian governments for its work in accomplishing its mission to Indigenous peoples.

UQAT's partnership network with Indigenous communities will raise its profile beyond the territories it serves.

UQAT will be set apart by the number of its publications and presentations with Indigenous coauthors.

POLICY AIM #4

HELP IMPROVE INTERCOMMUNITY RELATIONS

To help improve dialogue between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people in Quebec, UQAT is putting forward a series of actions to support mutual relations by using key people in social, economic, and cultural contexts. These actions will bring about our Vision of community services for 2024.



Vision for 2024 – Community services

Research, teaching, training, and other UQAT activities with respect to Indigenous realities will improve understanding of each person's culture, thus contributing to greater dialogue between individuals and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in the territories the university serves.

UQAT will be a point of reference through its support for all organizations and businesses that are striving to improve their cultural skills in their approach, management, and services. They will thereby become culturally secure and free of discrimination.

UQAT's activities for intercultural exchange will provide the university community and the people on the territories it serves with opportunities to learn more about life in Indigenous communities and become aware of the cultures of Indigenous peoples.

IMPLEMENTING THE 2019-2024 ACTION PLAN

The UQAT administration will act decisively to implement the 2019-2024 Action Plan. One action has already been taken. In January 2019, responsibility for Action Plan implementation was given to Vincent Rousson by making him Assistant Vice-Rector for Development of Services and Partnerships at UQAT. All future actions will reflect our wish to help achieve our goals by creating supportive forums for discussion and sharing.